

THE MAKING OF A TELEVISION DRAMA SERIES



IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL



DOCTOR WHO



ISSUE 26

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Context

IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL was the last of the horror **Whos** script edited by Robert Holmes. Although most of the actual editing was done by new script editor Anthony Read, Holmes' mark is obvious - cribbing from films like *The Curse of The Crimson Altar*, and picking up on the **Quatermass** mythos, then twisting these elements into something different again - as Craig Hinton explains in **Skull-duggery**. Producer Graham Williams was getting settled into his new job now, and he told IN-VISION about why he felt FENDAHL was Chrius Boucher's best script for the programme, as well as his last.

Production explains the details of how the story was made - in the old-**Who** mould and quite straightforwardly - and **Audience** this issue examines the reactions of children to the programme, and in particular to the opening episode of this technological ghost story about the origins of Man. □

CAST

THE DOCTOR.....Tom Baker
LEELA.....Louise Jameson
ADAM COLBY.....Edward Arthur
THEA RANSOME
Wanda Ventham
MAXIMILLIAN STAEL
Scott Fredericks
HIKER.....Graham Simpson (1)
DOCTOR FENDELMAN
Dennis Lill (1-3)
TED MOSS.....Edward Evans
DAVID MITCHELL
Derek Martin (1-2)
MARTHA TYLER.....Daphne Heard
JACK TYLER
Geoffrey Hinsliff (2-4)

SMALL & NON-SPEAKING

SECURITY GUARDS
David Elliott (2), Roy Pearce (2)
COVEN MEMBERS.....Geoffrey
Witherick (2), John Emms (3-4), Jay
McGrath (3-4), Douglas Stark (3-4)

CREW

TITLE MUSIC.....Ron Grainer &
the BBC Radiophonic Workshop
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
Prue Saenger
ASSISTANT FLOOR MANAGER
Karry Collier
DIRECTOR'S ASSISTANT
Di Clark
FLOOR ASSISTANT
Barbara Simonin

STUDIO LIGHTING.....Jim Purdie
TECHNICAL MANAGER

Peter Granger
STUDIO SOUND.....Alan Fogg
GRAMS OPERATOR

Gordon Phillipson
VISION MIXERS

Fred Law (1st studio),
Sue Thorne (2nd studio)

ELECTRONIC EFFECTS
Dave Jervis

SENIOR CAMERAMAN
Peter Hider

CREW.....10
FILM CAMERAMAN

Elmer Cossey
FILM SOUND.....Bill Meekums
ARMOURER.....Des Stewart
COSTUME DESIGNER

Amy Roberts
MAKE-UP ARTIST.....Pauline Cox
MAKE-UP ASSISTANTS

Wendy Freeman, Liz Walsh
VISUAL EFFECTS DESIGNER

Colin Mapson
DESIGNER.....Anna Ridley
INCIDENTAL MUSIC

Dudley Simpson
SPECIAL SOUND.....Dick Mills
PRODUCTION UNIT MANAGER

John Nathan Turner
STORY.....Chris Boucher
SCRIPT EDITOR.....Robert Holmes
(Anthony Read)

PRODUCER.....Graham Williams
DIRECTOR.....George Spenton-Foster

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TELEVISION

Alice in Wonderland (BBC)
Doctor Who (BBC, 1963-)
Quatermass (Euston Films, 1979)
Quatermass II (BBC, 1955)
Quatermass and the Pit (BBC, 1958)
The Quatermass Experiment (BBC,
1953)
Target (BBC, 1978-9)
Z Cars (BBC)
The Zodiac Factor (BBC - not made)

DOCTOR WHO

The Ark in Space (4C)
The Annageddon Factor (5F)
The Daemons (JJJ)
The Deadly Assassin (4P)
Face of Evil (4Q)
Genesis of the Daleks (4E)
Horror of Fang Rock (4V)
Image of the Fendahl (4X)
The Invisible Enemy (4T)
The Mind of Evil (FFF)
The Power of Kroll (5E)
Pyramids of Mars (4G)
The Robots of Death (4R)
The Seeds of Doom (4L)
Doctor Who and the Silurians (BBB)
The Sunmakers (4W)
The Talons of Weng-Chiang (4S)
The War Games (ZZ)

Skull-duggery

Craig Hinton examines the origins of the Fendahl



Even though there is no direct lineage between the two series, *Doctor Who* has frequently paid homage to that other great science fiction concept, *Quatermass*. When the future of the series was in doubt while *THE WAR GAMES* was in progress, it is rumoured that the BBC were considering remaking the series: instead Season Seven was produced both in the style, and with the themes of, Nigel Kneale's creation.

The central theme of the four *Quatermass* stories is that of 'compromised humanity', the enforced abandonment of Man's quintessence. In *The Quatermass Experiment*, it was both physical and mental, as three humans provided the raw materials for a genocidal vegetable creature akin to the Krynoid of *SEEDS OF DOOM*. In *Quatermass II*, the infiltration was already in place: slug-like aliens had arrived on Earth in artificial meteorites, and, having taken over a large number of humans, were forcing them to create an environment in which they could breed, rather as the Nestene Consciousness tried to do in the Auton stories. *The Quatermass Conclusion* showed how thin the veneer of civilization is by cracking it

open and exposing mankind at his worst: selfish, violent and savage. As moral values disintegrated, the cold, robotic savage. As moral values disintegrated, the cold, robotic intelligence responsible for this breakdown herded thousands upon thousands of people to traditional gathering places where it harvested them to provide nothing more than spice for its makers. The third of the quartet, *Quatermass and the Pit*, saw Kneale place the influence far back in time: five million years, to be precise. So far back that there was nothing we could do about it...

The Fendahl Core and a Fendahleen



Doctor Who has frequently made use of the idea of possession: *THE ARK IN SPACE*, *PYRAMIDS OF MARS* and many others. The concept of alien influence on Mankind has been a less frequent guest at the script library, but nevertheless, has made its mark. At the dawn of time, the Jagoroth provided the radiation necessary for the synthesis of amino acids; millennia ago, the Daemons demonstrated their god-like powers to primitive man and became part of mythology. And twelve million years ago, something totally evil fled to primeval Earth...

When Chris Boucher originally mapped out *THE IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL*, he saw it as a scientific ghost story. But somewhere during its creation, *FENDAHL* became quite a different animal. It became a *Quatermass* story. The parallels between *FENDAHL* and *Quatermass and the Pit* are too close to be accidental. From the central theme down to some of the scenes, the two stories are clearly making the same point: some members of Mankind are the result of alien genetic engineering, millions of years ago.

Both *FENDAHL* and *Quatermass* are icon stories: they depend upon a single object, which is both the trigger for the action to begin, and the central theme. Unlike the *Key to Time*, which, for the most part, was a McGuffin, the icons in these two stories are always at the forefront. Skulls feature in both: in *FENDAHL*, the skull is the repository of the Fendahl life force; in *Quatermass*, the unearthed Martian spaceship/robot probe is surrounded by the skulls of augmented

Man. But let us take a step back from the details and look at the background.

Hobb, as in Hobbs Lane, is an old name for the devil (as in hobgoblin). Fetch, as in Fetchborough, is an ancient name for an apparition. Both places have a history of psychic activity: Hobbs Lane in Knightsbridge experienced the psychic shadows of the Martians whenever vibrations aroused the spaceship, while Fetchborough, due to its position on a time fissure, was no stranger to witchcraft and hauntings. Although the Fendahl Core was not directly responsible for this, there is evidence to suggest that, even miles away in Kenya, it was able to tap some of the fissure's power.

But how did the respective aliens arrive on Earth? The Martians crashed in the Thames Valley, five million years ago, perishing with their cargo before being buried. The Fendahl also came from the Red Planet, albeit indirectly. Having destroyed all other members of its race, as well as all the indigenous life on the Fifth Planet, it fled before the Time Lords could destroy it. Being telepathic, the Fendahl was capable of teleportation across space, and leapt across to Mars, laying that world waste as well (busy planet, Mars), before landing on Earth. The suggestion is that the Fendahl was exhausted, and therefore became dormant, like a spore. Both the skull and the Martians' spaceship's cargo threatened

"Are you saying that about twelve million years ago, on a nameless planet which no longer exists, evolution went up a blind alley? Natural selection turned back on itself, and a creature evolved which prospered by absorbing the energy wavelengths of life itself. It ate life, all life - including that of its own kind?"

"Yes. In other words, the Fendahl. Then the Time Lords decided to destroy the entire planet, and hid the fact from posterity. They're not supposed to do that sort of thing, you know."

"So, when the Time Lords acted it was too late. The Fendahl had already come here."

"yes. Probably taking in Mars on its way through."

"Then it got itself buried, but not killed."

"The Fendahl is death. How do you kill death? No, what happened was this: the energy amassed by the Fendahl was stored in the skull, and dissipated slowly as a biological transmutation field. Now any appropriate life form that came within the field was altered so it ultimately evolved into something suitable for the Fendahl to use."

"Are you saying that skull created Man?"

"No, I'm saying it may have affected his evolution... That would explain the dark side of Man's nature. Well, it's just a theory... If you want an alternative explanation, the Fendahl fed into the RNA of certain individuals the instincts and compulsions necessary to recreate. These were fed through the generations until they reached Fendelman and people like him."

"Well, that's possibly more plausible."

"On the other hand, it could all be just a coincidence."

to revolutionise the history of Mankind, by indicating homo sapiens on Earth millions of years earlier than expected. One difference is that the Fendahl was not a member of the human race, while the skulls in Knightsbridge most definitely were.

Once the icons had been exhumed, modern technology was brought to bear, most notably devices designed to visualise hidden secrets. While the Sonic Time Scanner scanned the skull for a 'sonic shadow', the Optic-Encephalograph dug

other legacies...

Once activated, both the skull and the spaceship demonstrated the ability to interchange matter and energy to their own ends. The skull was able to feed from the time fissure, while the spaceship, once awoken by a stray electricity cable, both consumed its own physical substance and bled the fear and horror of the frightened people of London. Curiously, while the Martian ship transformed itself into a huge phantom Martian, the Fendahl skull remained intact,

into the human brain to witness the race memories of the Martian Wild Hunt. Indeed, both stories make a fuss about race memories, in the same way that DOCTOR WHO AND THE SILURIANS did. The scene of the hiker trying to escape from the Fendahleen resembles Sladden's possessed flight from the dig, as nightmares are made real. Linked to the idea of race memory is the theory that the Martians and the Fendahl, as well as the Daemons and the Malus war machine, are responsible for Man's obsession with witchcraft, providing many of the popular images and superstitions (especially horns).

The witchcraft theme is more obvious in the Doctor Who stories - THE DAEMONS, and IMAGE OF THE FENDAH, where the ubiquitous followers dress the alien science up with the popular trappings of the coven and the Black Mass. Quatermass gave this a wide berth, preferring to concentrate on the



The Sonic Time Scanner

preferring to recreate its physical form using human beings as raw material (a la **The Quatermass Experiment**). But both methods had the same end product: the physical manifestation of the alien. However, while the Fendahl needs the darker emotions to survive, the Martians do not. The violence that surrounded their resurrection was a byproduct, the re-enactment of the racial purge of the Wild Hunt.

All of this skirts around the most obvious similarity of them all: the fact that both alien races altered the basic genetic structure of mankind in order to ensure their own survival. The Martians, aware that their planet was dying, made regular shopping trips to Earth, five million years BC, returning home with a clutch of apemen. These were augmented: their brains were enlarged and we can assume that certain of the Martian racial characteristics were added to the subconscious. When the Martian race finally became extinct, it was in the knowledge that a colony of proxy Martians had been established on Earth. The Martian traits were watered down over the years, only surfacing in those people we would call 'sensitives'. Only the activation of the sentient spaceship was enough to unearth the full extent of the Martian racial purity drive, which almost destroyed mankind.

The Fendahl, on the other hand, was a little more subtle than surgery. Two theories are put forward for the effect that the Fendahl had on Mankind: either it emitted a 'biological transmutation field' that altered the genetic structure of certain individuals, making them

susceptible to its control, or it fed into the RNA of selected people, creating a bloodline of servants who would one day effect its rebirth. The latter theory certainly ties in with Fendleman's name. Whichever theory is correct, there is no doubt that "Mankind has been used". Thea Ransome is direct proof that the Fendahl was capable of altering the physical and mental structure of human beings. "We are the Martians" says Roney

The Skull starts to gain control of Thea



in **Quatermass and the Pit**; 'Are you saying we're all aliens' is Colby's analogous speech in **IMAGE OF THE FENDAH**L.

Naturally, for Mankind to survive, both the Martians and the Fendahl must be vanquished. The destruction of the icons is almost irrelevant in both stories: by the climax, the Martian ship has sublimed into a glowing Hob, while the skull is dormant and easily disposed of in a handy supernova. The main problem is the evil that both have released. And in both cases, it is in superstition and myth that the answer lies. While iron earths the Hob, the Fendahleen, being gastropod in nature, are slaves to their osmotic balance. Just like slugs, they dehydrate when hit by salt - in superstition, we throw salt over our shoulder to 'blind the Devil'.

It cannot be coincidence that the two stories resemble one another so closely. Nor is there anything wrong with remaking such a strong storyline. People still have a strong fascination with the occult, and, somehow, dressing it up with the garb of science fiction makes it seem that much more respectable. Now all we have to do is wait for **Doctor Who** to tackle **The Quatermass Conclusion**. □

Armageddon Peddler



Like his predecessor, Graham Williams was producer of *Doctor Who* for three years. He left the BBC in March 1980 at the end of his twelve year contract, satisfied that he had maintained *Doctor Who's* high ratio of Saturday evening audience, if not the same actual figures. In the first of a two-part special feature, Graham Williams tells IN-VISION how he came to *Doctor Who*, and what he found when he got there.

Being producer of *Doctor Who* is like no other job at the BBC. On other series it is possible to entrust most of the legwork to your directors. But on *Doctor Who* you have to be present at all the design meetings, all the sypher dubs, and all of the film editing sessions that normally you would not dream of going to. The reason is, nobody else knows - the director included - what sound you used for this monster in its last story, or the way K-9's voice ought to be treated. Essentially your job is to provide a continuity point and a focus of editorial judgement able to say, "The TARDIS lands like this", or "That spaceship sounds too much like what we did two stories ago."

My boss, Graeme McDonald, used to say to me, bleary-eyed after eighteen straight days in studios and syphers, "Graham, you ought to delegate." My answer was always: "Great, but to whom?" They would not let *Doctor Who* have an associate producer -

which is something I continually petitioned for. So John Nathan Turner took on some of those duties, but always with an air of "better wait till the Guv' gets here and double check that first."

Eventually they did rationalise it out, particularly when it looked like at one point I would be away in hospital for three months Barry Letts was given a watching brief over the show, and that was strengthened to making him executive producer for the first year when John took over after I left.

I was very happy to do *Doctor Who*, but it did come about in a very untypical way. I was producing a series for Bill Slater called *The Zodiac Factor*. This was to be the BBC's entry into the feature-films-for-television market, with a huge amount of capital money injected from California. Nevertheless, the way the Corporation interpreted its Royal Charter then was to insist on keeping 51% or better of the equity in the show, thereby re-

taining editorial control. So we had to look at budgeting for 51% of the costs.

I had a finance meeting with Aubrey Singer, a very good corporate accountant for the BBC, who looked at my figures and said, "Excellent Graham. It's a terrific budget - very detailed, very realistic. Thank you very much indeed. But the trouble is you don't seem to have taken into account the Variable Fixed Costs..."

Not being a great grammarian, I did wonder if this was not a contradiction in terms. It turned out that these were elements of the budget - office furniture, script printing, and so on - that would normally be fixed, but which they wanted treating as cash. Consequently the whole series was tossed out of the window - which was the intention of the Controller of BBC1 all along, because he did not want to allocate so much of the Corporation's programming resources to this one strand.

The shame is, we had spent £20,000 commissioning from twelve bloody good writers twelve scripts - the twelve signs of the Zodiac which was the linking theme. It was a huge amount to have spent in 1976. And every single one of those scripts has since become either a feature film or a successful novel. It would have put the BBC well ahead of Euston or Zenith in producing feature films for television.

Bill Slater resigned over it. And as I was walking out of the BBC bar with him, he said: "We can't really leave you in limbo, can we?" As it happened, I'd already devised another series for the BBC called *Target*, based on some research I'd done while on *Z Cars* about how the New York police were tackling major criminals by targeting them. It was a technique well in advance of anything we were doing here, although some regional crime squads were tinkering with it.

I had invented *Target*, but to my eternal chagrin had given it free and gratis to the BBC - thinking I would be far too busy on *Zodiac Factor*. That must have coincided with Philip Hinchcliffe saying to Bill Slater, as I would three years later to Graeme McDonald, "I'm fed up doing *Doctor Who*, give me something else." So *Target* was

The Fendahl skull



given to Philip, who proceeded to make it rather more in the vein of *The Sweeney* than I would have done. And I got the straight swap, being put by Bill on to *Doctor Who*. With the benefit of 20/20 hindsight, it probably would have been better for me to have done *Target* and for Philip to have done another year on *Who*.

Luckily I had long loved *Doctor Who* anyway, principally as a viewer. I had always admired the fact that they had got themselves virtually what was a producer-proof, writer-proof, actor-proof programme. It really was almost impossible to go wrong with it. And it had the most wonderful chance of recasting the principle actor if ever he got a bug in his head, which seemed too good to be true. I had been used to working on series where the leading actors, however marvellous they were, by series two believed they owned the programme.

I went into *Doctor Who* rather as a journeyman; as a writer/producer there to do a professional job. I didn't have a burning commitment to the show then and I don't think I developed one all the time I was on it. It was just a television programme, not a way of life - or rather, it should not become a way of life. *Doctor Who* did become a way of life, which was one reason why, ultimately, I gave it up.

At the time I had no idea of just how much I was taking on. I thought, in my youthful arrogance, it would be no problem. I had after all done the first television drama outside-broadcast series ever, which was *Z Cars* when it became an all-location programme. I had done all-film scripts which was, again, quite a big deal. I had worked on period dramas, thrillers, even some science fiction, and I thought I knew the television production scene pretty well.

But, after the very first *Doctor Who* studio session I sat in on, I felt I had walked in out of the stone age. I had no idea what they were doing half the time, let alone how they were achieving such good results. The complexity of it, the planning that was needed, the imagination that was being employed by all the departments who never took anything for granted, and all on such mini budgets. It really was astounding. So I had to chuck



Colby's lab - complete with skull...

away all I thought I knew about television and start from scratch.

Things like electronic video effects were new to me, but then they were still relatively new anyway. Jim McTaggart had used Colour Separation Overlay on his version of *Alice in Wonderland* but it hadn't been very successful. My wife was then working with ITN. They had a similar system called ChromaKey, which employed the same principle but they were having the devil's own job getting it to look right because they were using yellow as a background. My wife suggested to the chief engineer that he should 'phone the BBC and ask them about it, which he did. They told him what paint to use, what shade of paint, and the settings on the camera. After that it worked a dream.

It was in July 1976 that I met Philip Hinchcliffe to discuss how we should hand over. But although in theory I had between July and spring the next year to take up the reigns, in practice during that time Robert Holmes was with Philip night and day working on problems in hand - which I would later learn was usual on *Doctor Who*. Even going up to Northampton, where they were doing *THE TALONS OF WENG-CHIANG*, I could not get to speak to Bob for more than ten minutes about trying to commission the next block of twenty-six episodes. The nearest we got before January was commissioning *THE VAMPIRE MUTATIONS* from Terrance

Dicks.

That of course came to a grinding halt the day I delivered the first script to Graeme McDonald. It bounced back to me that afternoon, at the speed of light, with a message from Graeme that he had commissioned as a Christmas show an adaptation of *Dracula* with Louis Jourdan, and he had no intention of allowing a "lampoon version" (his words) going out beforehand on *Doctor Who*. Would I therefore please reconsider?

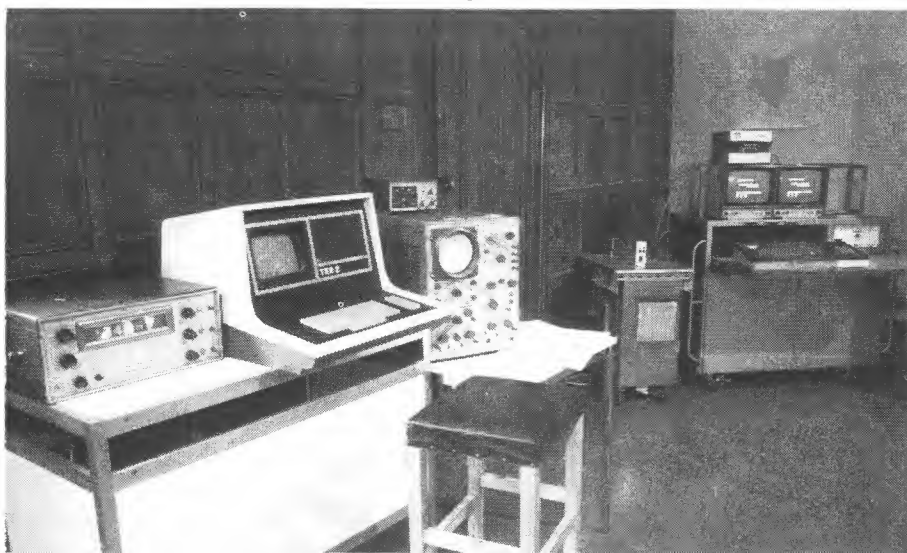
I was terribly upset by this, for several reasons - not the least being that we were losing such a potentially good story to go out on. With Philip, Bob had been spoofing Hammer Films for years, and I saw no reason to discourage this practice. Hammer had been going for years in this country and had hardly drawn a breath of comment from the infamous Mrs Whitehouse. I suppose because so much of it was set in the nineteenth century and in foreign countries it was deemed to be the acceptable face of horror - which is as far down that road as I wanted to go.

To me, a lot of what Philip had done went too far. When I learned I was taking the show over, I made special efforts to watch it. One of the ones I saw - *GENESIS OF THE DALEKS* - had Lis Sladen climbing up a rocket gantry, being shot at by guards with rifles. She almost falls once, and then on reaching the top she gets caught, and is deliberately tripped by her captors and left dangling in mid-air while they laugh.

I had by then just become father to our first son, and so was more aware that if children were going to be watching *Doctor Who* at 5:25 then a lot of this sadism and deliberate shock/horror, which Bob and Philip took a particular glee in producing, was not very defensible. I did not think Philip was right to let the drowning sequence in *THE DEADLY ASSASSIN* go through, because the violence was too realistic and therefore could be imitated. Even on *Z Cars* you did not show a fight using a broken bottle for precisely that reason.

I would have been quite happy to have continued down the Hammer Films road. But by the time we were seeking replacements for *THE WITCH LORDS*, we were

Electronic meets Gothic in Fetch Priory



riding in on the back of *THE TALONS OF WENG-CHIANG* which had been made with an even greater emphasis on horror than usual - remember scenes like Greel's face being unmasked, or the knife-wielding mannekin with its blood-soaked hands. With the climate so extreme, it was inevitable the pendulum would swing the other way. I was happy to tone down the realistic horror and gore. But then the BBC told me to go further and actually clean it up. It was over-reaction, of that I am sure, but it did not help that in my first year I was under a directive to take out anything graphic in the depiction of violence.

Those restrictions extended to Leela as well, although to begin with there was no certainty that I was going to inherit her. Part of the reason for my trip to Northampton to see *WENG-CHIANG* was to talk Louise Jameson around to the idea of staying. At that stage she felt she wanted to spread her wings and go elsewhere.

The scrapping of *THE WITCH LORDS* effectively put paid, that year, to my idea for an umbrella theme. I had not had the access to my script editor I would have needed - I did not have enough time with him and with the writers to sit down and plan what could be achieved, and neither did I have the experience with the show. In retrospect I think that if I had tried an umbrella theme for that first year, it would have been a disaster.

Even after the Key To Time year, when I was sitting with John Nathan Turner talking about another possible umbrella for the future, I did not seriously think it was worth trying again. It had been a brave experiment, but the constraints it put on production were too great.

My biggest problem in year one was to replace the loss of the horror element, and to begin with I don't think I had any firm idea. I knew I had to keep the tension and the quirkiness, because they are absolutely quintessential *Doctor Who* features. I was torn on the one hand with Wanting Bob to select all the authors, because he was the oldest hand at the game, but on the other hand I could never get hold of Bob because he was always closetted away writing yet another script.

People like Douglas Adams were already in the background. He was in the stages of being 'brought on' by Bob, even though I believe, he was still at university when he started writing for us. We had the storyline for *THE PIRATES* a long time before *The Hitch-hiker's Guide To The Galaxy* was even a gleam in Radio 4's eye.

IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL had also been in the pipeline a while. That was very much a pre-clampdown story, an archetypal Fifties horror in the *Quatermass* way of mad scientists doing mad experiments. I actually think *FENDAHL* was the best script Chris Boucher did, and was easily the best script of the season. *Doctor Who* was always supposed to reach a target audience of fifteens to over fifties, and yet you had to pro-



The Doctor meets Eustace - fresh from Quatermass, and older than him...

duce material that each age group could enjoy. I think it was Douglas who first coined the phrase in later years: "making scripts simple enough for the adults to understand, yet complicated enough for the kids to enjoy." Chris's script I think fulfilled that brief admirably.

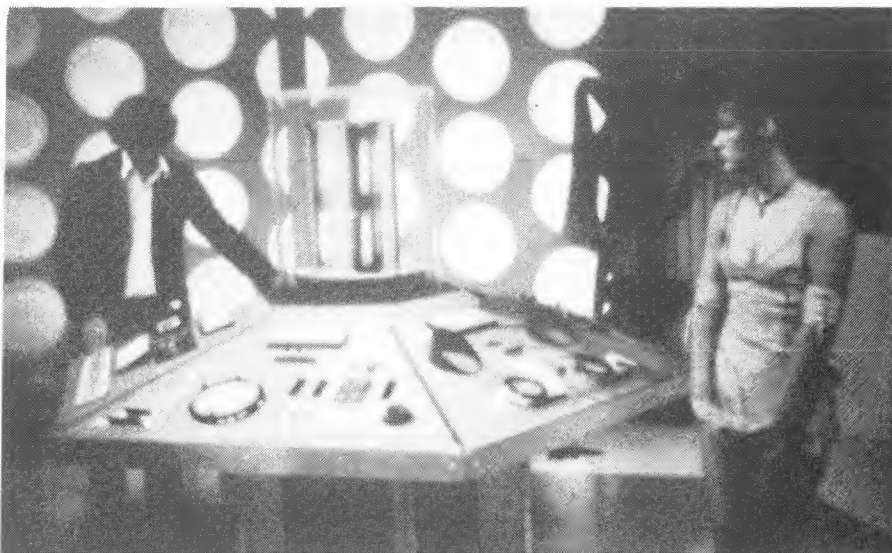
The main problems with *THE INVISIBLE ENEMY*, because it was the one that had to be brought forward, were on two counts. Firstly, we had lost the good vampire story from Terrance Dicks. Secondly, it failed in the belief of matching the director to the script.

You always aim to get a director with strengths and weaknesses that complement a script with similar strengths and weaknesses. I had worked with Derrick Goodwin on *Z*

Cars and had found him to be a very effective and very snappy drama director with a lot of modern ideas. I wanted him to do the first story because I felt he could bring a fresh eye to the old, traditional Gothic horror story. Instead of which he had to do, fresh out of ITV non-drama productions, the most technically complex *Doctor Who* there had ever been upto that point.

So Derrick was stuck having to work with models, with ChromaKey, with K-9, with electronic effects - the lot. And that first studio I did with him (which was my first studio too) was heartburn and panic such as you have never seen before. The day after we came out of the studio I just crashed out for 36 hours solid. It was a punishing baptism of fire. □

Leela almost didn't make it into the TARDIS for season 15...



Production

THE main thing writer Chris Boucher remembers about *IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL* is not good. "The worst experience of my writing life," recalls Boucher, "involved the first read-through of *IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL* with Tom Baker. As a writer you always get a little miffed when someone mucks around with your text, but in this case it wasn't just mucking about - it was an act of pure, undisguised demolition.

"I thought Tom Baker was by far and away the best Doctor Who. But he really was a monster to work with, and I don't think he ever realised just how hurtful some of the things he said and did were.

"On this particular occasion the director, George Spenton-Foster, had taken all the cast out to lunch. He always reckoned it relaxed everyone and put them in a good frame of mind for the read-through. Trouble was, the only beggar who hadn't been out to lunch with them was me. So the only one sitting there sober that afternoon was yours truly. And, of course, Tom was in one of his playful moods and sent the script up rotten. Now maybe the script deserved it, but to me personally it was so embarrassing. And as I embarrass easily, I'm afraid it showed in full view of everybody.

"I was working on *Blake's Seven* by then, having written the *FEN-*

DAHL scripts just before I got offered the job. I went back to my office afterwards and I just kicked the crap out of my filing cabinet. It's probably sitting in someone's office even now with a bottom drawer that's still unopenable because I kicked it so hard. I remember bringing down all sorts of curses on Tom Baker's head, not the least of which that I hoped he would die horribly in a cellar full of rats."

Scripting

With two successful Doctor Who scripts already written, there was little doubt Chris Boucher would be offered an opportunity to write again for the programme in 1977. Persuaded late in the day to stay on as script editor for a further six months, Robert Holmes knew he had to assemble a brace of scripts for season fifteen quickly, and with little scope for rewrites. *THE ROBOTS OF DEATH* had been delivered in a workable form on time, so Boucher got the commission.

Boucher remembers his original idea: "I wanted to write a ghost story, and looked up various words related to witchcraft and so on." Hence Fetch Priory, Fetch Woods, and the village of Fetchborough.

This was in late spring 1977, shortly before Chris Boucher was made script editor on *Blake's Seven*.

The vast workload he would face on that series reduced the time he could spend doing rewrites on the *FENDAHL* scripts, so that duty fell primarily to Robert Holmes.

New script editor

By July 1977, Graham Williams had found a replacement for Robert Holmes - seasoned writer and television producer Anthony Read.

Although it would be screened after *FENDAHL*, *THE SUN MAKERS* was completed first by Holmes. He then edited it with Tony Read in attendance, so that the new script editor could see how scripts for Doctor Who were handled. This was no slur on Read's abilities, merely a practical exercise to demonstrate the extra overheads of Doctor Who: continuity, visual and electronic effects considerations.

On *IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL*, Read did most of the script editing, with Holmes as background advisor. This is why the scripts, if not the televised episodes, credit both writers as script editor.

The decision to move *IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL* to third in transmission order was Graham Williams', and was for dramatic balance. *THE INVISIBLE ENEMY*, rescheduled from first to second place, was a very high-tech story with lots of corridors and running gun battles. *THE SUN MAKERS* was too similar, and Williams wanted a better balance: so he inserted the Earth-bound *FENDAHL* story between the two.

No K-9

One problem, quickly disposed of, was K-9. Boucher's story breakdown and initial rehearsal scripts had been written before the decision was made to keep K-9 as a regular companion. Boucher was also no great fan of K-9, and most of the action took place in thick woodlands, rustic cottages, or downstairs cellars. There was no room for the dog, which needed space, a smooth floor, and no stairs in order to move unhindered. Two *TARDIS* scenes were inserted to explain K-9's temporary incapacitation (caused by corroded circuitry); this also eliminated the need to hire John Leeson to provide voice-overs, and K-9 communicates in the story only by nodding.



Witchcraft had a big influence

Costumes

Director for the serial was George Spenton-Foster, a newcomer to Doctor Who but an old associate of Graham Williams from their days together on *Z-Cars*. Among the decisions Foster took on the show was to agree costume changes for the Doctor and Leela.

Leela's costume change was the most noticeable. Sewn from a softer suede leather, the dress (created by Amy Roberts) was lighter in material and colouring than that designed by John Bloomfield for *THE FACE OF EVIL*. It was also much shorter, missing the front and back flaps which Louise Jameson had requested be added to the original costume for modesty. Bloomfield's idea of 'Leela jewellery' was retained, but key features added by Roberts were a pair of leather armbands (worn above the elbow) and a dropped waist belt (with the knife sheath resting on the left hip). The Doctor comments on her new costume in the first episode, as he does when she returns to wearing the old one at the end of the story.

Tom Baker's costume was less obviously changed. For the remainder of the season and throughout most of the following one, he would wear a long burgundy coat, speckled grey trousers and a pair of buccaneer boots (similar to those worn in *THE DEADLY ASSASSIN*). The idea for the boots came from Tom Baker. The felt hat remained the same, but a newly-knitted scarf, much wider and thicker, completed the familiar look of the fourth Doctor. The scarf would later disguise the disappearance of the checked waistcoat, which Tom Baker claimed restricted his movements too much.

The other principle costume for the story was for Wanda Ventham as Thea Ransome. Her transformation into the Fendahl core in episode

Tom Baker is trapped in a cellar full of Fendahleen





The main element which required so much time, and such a large part of the programme's budget, was the night filming. Shooting in August, daylight did not fade much before nine o'clock in the evening. And so even though a lot of setting up could be done beforehand (for example, cabling and positioning lights), filming proper could not begin much before 9:30p.m..

Elmer Cossey was the film cameraman on location, and remembers the night work. He told *IN-VISION*: "They were rushing at night through a wood, with this whole house going up. The most interesting thing about that was that we had 150 feet of track laid out in the wood, which all had to be levelled up. The Doctor and Leela were running down through this wood, with mysterious lights in the background.

"We got it all ready to go, and one of the dressers came up to the chief electrician and said, 'Your generator's on fire'. The gaffer said, 'Oh don't be silly, a joke's a joke'. And the dresser said, 'No, honestly, your generator's on fire!' I said, 'Hang on a moment,' and we looked round. Over the top of this hill was a red glow and smoke. Suddenly there was a bang, and all the lights went out.

"There were frantic phone calls back to London to the lighting company - a little difficult at two o'clock in the morning. But by about 4a.m. we had another generator down, and fortunately there was still plenty of darkness."

Including setting up, the unit spent a week at Stargroves, under the direction of George Spenton-Foster. The director was used to night filming from his period *Z-Cars*. One of the daytime scenes was filmed but dropped during editing: after encountering Ted Moss, the Doctor and Leela leave him as they go off to the priory. When they go, Moss takes from his shirt a square metal charm, etched with a pentagram design, bows his head in deference, and presses the charm to his forehead.

In the studio

All studio recording was done in TC6, block one commencing Saturday August 20th 1977 for two days, and block two for a further two days from Sunday September 4th.

In most respects, *IMAGE OF*

THE FENDAHL was a very simple *Doctor Who* to record in the studio. It required only a few sets, and they were technically uncomplicated. There was little in the way of visual effects, other than those to create the Fendaleen monsters. Indeed for the episode four scenes of the ceiling crashing into the corridor, one of the oldest earthquake effects stunts in the book was employed: releasing light plaster, polystyrene and balsa wood masonry chunks from nets hung above the sets.

The Fendahl

Visual effects, co-ordinated by Colin Mapson, handled all the manifestations of the Fendahl with the exception of the core, which was a collaboration between costume and make-up. They were assisted by the lighting crew, who gave permission for the electrically-operated lighting

rigs to be used to raise Wanda Ventham smoothly vertical after Thea Ransome transforms into the core. Wires connected to the rigs were attached to a frame beneath Ventham.

The transformation of Thea into the core was achieved with a creeping electronic wipe: overlaying a picture of the core over a shot of Thea in the same position, the camera locked-off between costume changes. Electronic effects designer Dave Jervis accomplished this from the inlay desk, where he also produced earlier shots of Thea surrounded by a golden glow (brightly-lit shots of Thea with her surroundings darkened with a masked-off, soft-focus ChromaKey background).

Two skulls were used in the serial. The first was a standard prop skull, painted in natural colours and scored with the pentagram design. This skull was mounted on a stand,

Leela's new costume and hairdo



IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL-11

four was billed as the main selling point of the serial. Specifically the press photocall was arranged for the final day of recording, the only day when Ventham would appear in full make-up and costume as the Fendahl.

To accent her radiant appearance as the core, her natural blonde hair was concealed beneath a dark wig for her appearance as Thea Ransome. Ventham was also requested not to grin as Thea, so as to make her Fendahl smile of triumph over Stael more terrible in contrast to her previous appearance. Her enlarged, saucer-like eyes were the result of careful make-up application; it did mean that Ventham had to perform most of her scenes as the Fendahl with her eyes closed, as the enlarged pupils were painted over her own closed eyelids.

Location work

The locations chosen for the story were the same as for *PYRAMIDS OF MARS*, the house and grounds of the Stargroves mansion near Newbury, Berkshire. At the time, it was still the English residence of Rolling Stone Mick Jagger. A continuity irony is that, just as in *PYRAMIDS*, the mansion is destroyed at the end of *FENDAHL*, a point the Doctor hints at in episode four when he and Leela escape the scene: "vanishing priorities take a lot of explaining".

Although, as before, the unit was forbidden to film inside the house, they were able to make better use of some of the lodge outbuildings around the stables, and of the main entrance porchway to the house.

Filming was much simpler than the *PYRAMIDS* unit had found. With the exception of the police box, virtually no props were taken on location, and no redressing of the site was needed.

Production



Colin Mapson working on the full-sized Fendahleen

which contained the electronics to power an internal light. The effect of Thea's empathy with the skull was achieved by superimposing Wanda Ventham's face over the glowing prop so that the bone structures matched up. In one close-up shot, her eye is matched to the skull's glowing, empty socket.

The second skull was a simpler prop, but coated in scotchlite paint to make it glow when lit by a front axial projection (FAP) device fitted to the camera. This prop was used for the sequence in the cellar where the Doctor (wearing a protective glove) puts the skull into a radiation-proof container. Similar use of FAP made the pentagram on the cellar floor glow on cue.

Fendahleen

The greatest effects overhead were the Fendahleen, of which two sizes were made. The smaller were tabletop puppets formed out of foam rubber coated in latex. They were operated from below as glove puppets, and each was fitted with a tube connected to an oxygen cylinder. Opening the valve passed a stream of air up to the Fendahleen's mouth, making the tendrils quiver.

One full-sized Fendahleen was built by Colin Mapson, big enough to hide an operator. The same construction and tendrill-quivering

techniques were used, except that the foam body was supported by a cane and wire underframe. Because of its bulk and the trailing air hoses, the larger Fendahleen was very limited in movement. A separate shot of just the tail passing over a trail of slime had to be done as an insert for part three.

Moving the big Fendahleen round the studio meant shifting sections of scenery to get it into place, particularly when it had to appear in any of the three corridor sets.

Chris Boucher was not impressed with the result: "I spent three episodes building up to this monster, and it turned out to be something I'd quite like to take home and pet and cuddle."

The glass salt flasks were constructed from unbreakable plastic, both for safety reasons and to minimise time clearing up. Sound effects were dubbed on later to give the illusion of the flasks shattering. One of Chris Boucher's scripted jokes retained for part four is Leela's escape from the cellar, when she tosses a flask of salt over her left shoulder for luck (recalling the Doctor's earlier comments about the possible origins of the superstition).

Implosion

The explosion and implosion of the house was done without pyrotechnics at Stargroves, just as Ian



Embryo Fendahleen materialise from Thea



The complete Fendahleen

IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL-13



Thea held captive in the pentagram



Colby and Stael watch Thea's transformation



The transformation is complete (don't look at her eyes)

Scoones had avoided for the climax of *PYRAMIDS OF MARS*. The central explosion was achieved by igniting gas burners behind a cut-out photographic blow-up of the mansion, with holes where the windows should be. The warping effect was achieved by using mirrorlon, a distorting reflecting surface which was previously used for Ice Warrior gun effects. The subsequent implosion was simply the film of the explosions run backwards, with Dudley Simpson's music also run backwards.

Trivia

In this story the fact that the TARDIS is telepathic is restated. We do not see the TARDIS land, but we do see some of its data banks - clear perspex slabs.

The year in which the story takes place is not given, although the BBC preview after the last episode of *THE INVISIBLE ENEMY* describes it as set in "the present". The actual time of year is given though: according to Martha Tyler the date for the events of the last episodes (after the Doctor and Leela return from their fifth planet jaunt) is Lammas Eve - 31st July.

The skull which is central to the plot was apparently discovered in Kenya by Fendelman's time scanner, then excavated, reassembled and named 'Eustace' by Colby. Thea Ransome then ascertained its age.

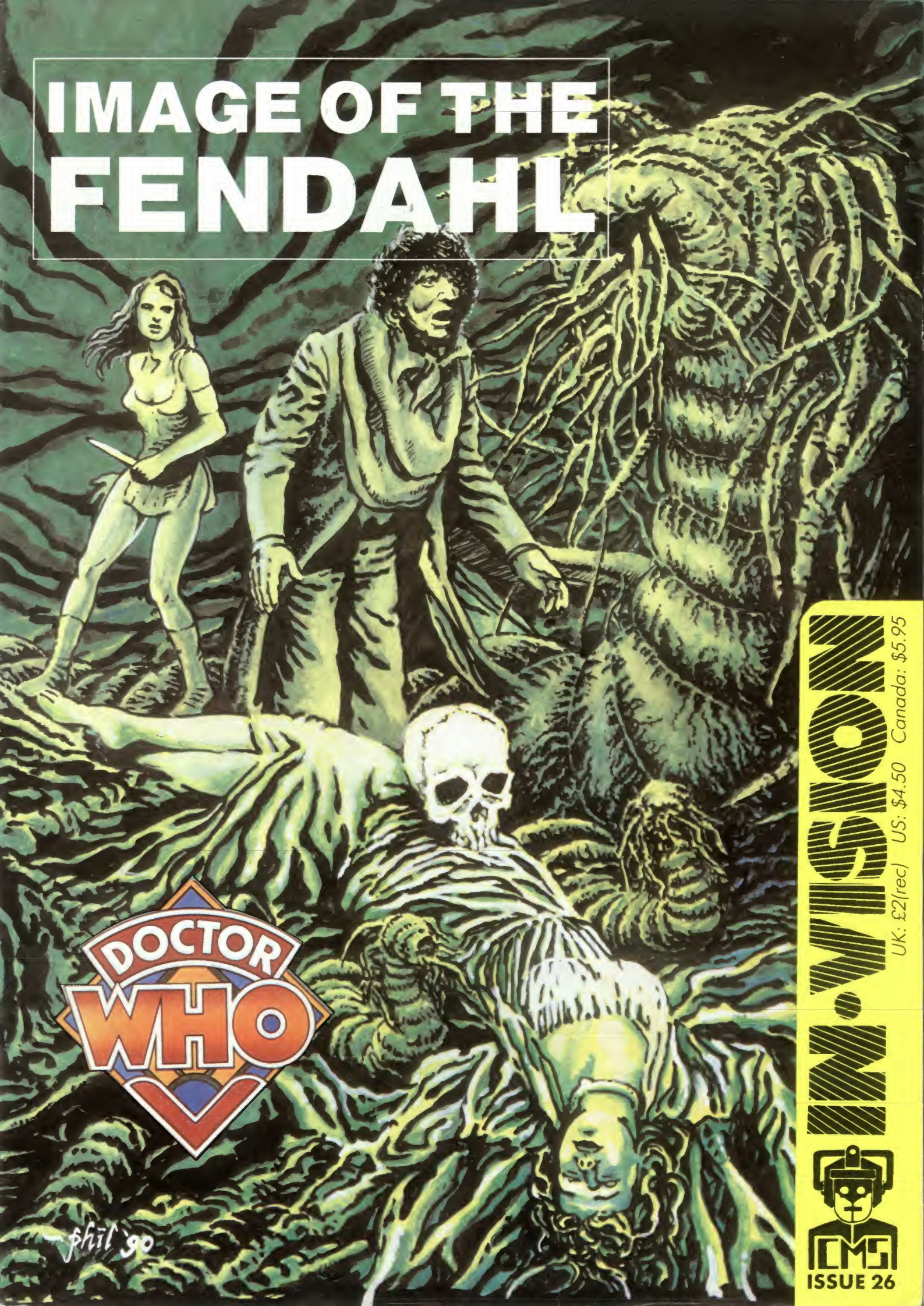
The Fendahl is described by the Doctor as a creature from his own mythology - and he claims he was frightened in childhood by the story. The fifth planet is said to be 107 million miles from Earth, and 12 million years back in time (to match the age of the skull).

When the Fendahl absorbs the coven, the only member to protest or move is Ted Moss - either because he has not yet seen the eyes of the Core, or perhaps because he is the only speaking role.

A continuity blunder is that the Doctor says that it was a Fendahleen which "killed the hiker and Mitchell." Yet he has never been told either that the first victim was a hiker, or that the security guard's name was Mitchell. Mitchell is played by Derek Martin, better known in Who circles as a stuntman with *Havoc*, and in particular for choreographing the battle sequences for the Jon Pertwee story *THE MIND OF EVIL*.

This is the first story in which Radio Times credits the lead character as "The Doctor" - something that did not happen again until *THE POWER OF KROLL*. □

IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL



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